Islamic Studies

Assignment 1

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**Q) What are non-Muslims’ scholarly views about Prophet Muhammad PBUH? Explain the appraisals in a comprehensive way.Top of Form**

Non-Muslim scholars' thoughts on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are diverse and varied, reflecting several historical, religious, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. These points of view often connect with wider conversations about religion, history, politics, and ethics, contributing to existing debates and interpretations of Prophet Muhammad's legacy.

**"He was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue; if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Muhammad, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports."** - Bosworth Smith

Smith, a British historian, portrays Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a unique character who exercised tremendous influence and power while avoiding the trappings of traditional rulership. He emphasizes Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) ability to rule and govern efficiently, highlighting his role as both a religious and political leader, comparing him to historical leaders such as Caesar and Pope, while noting that Muhammad did not use the usual symbols of authority associated with such positions.

**"Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, Is there any man greater than he?"** - Alphonse de Lamartine

Alphonse de Lamartine, a French writer, poet, and politician, portrays Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a complex and powerful character in human history. Muhammad is credited with several responsibilities by Lamartine, including those of a philosopher, orator, legislator, and military commander. He recognizes the Prophet's (PBUH) significant influence on religious and political landscapes, claiming that his magnificence is beyond that of any other figure.

**"The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes! There is Muhammad the Prophet; there is Muhammad the Warrior; Muhammad the Businessman; Muhammad the Statesman; Muhammad the Orator; Muhammad the Reformer; Muhammad the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad the Judge; Muhammad the Saint."** - Annie Besant

Annie, a British socialist, theosophist, and women's rights activist, highlights Muhammad's (SAW) variety and achievements in numerous areas of life, such as religion, politics, commerce, social change, and humanitarianism. She emphasizes Muhammad's (SAW) social effect and compassionate disposition, focusing on his duties as a leader, reformer, and protector of the underprivileged.

**"He was the most successful of all religious personalities."**- Michael H. Hart

Michael, an American astrophysicist and author of "The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History," assesses Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) influence and achievements within the context of religious history. Hart asserts that Muhammad's success as a religious figure surpasses that of other religious leaders, reflecting his significant impact on shaping religious beliefs, practices, and societies worldwide.

**"A mass of detail in the early sources shows that he was an honest and upright man who had gained the respect and loyalty of others who were likewise honest and upright men."**- Montgomery Watt

Montgomery, a Scottish historian and Emeritus Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, offers a scholarly assessment of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) character based on historical sources. Watt emphasizes Muhammad's integrity and moral character, noting that contemporary accounts portray him as an honest and upright individual who earned the respect and loyalty of others. This quotation reflects Watt's objective analysis of Muhammad's personality and his reputation among his contemporaries.

In summary, the perspectives of non-Muslim scholars on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offer a nuanced understanding of his profound impact and character. From comparisons to historical figures to recognition of his multifaceted roles and moral integrity, these viewpoints collectively illuminate the enduring significance of his legacy in shaping religious, social, and ethical landscapes worldwide.